HEARTH AND HOME

Mention must be made of two important structures outside the house—the privy and the storehouse. The Ainu did not use the privy as a source of fertilizer for the crops; Batchelor says he was told that it would be an impertinence to the *kamui* of vegetation to offer them help in this way. Nowadays men's and women's privies are usually together, with a flimsy partition or none, but formerly, I was told, the distance between the two privies was not less than twenty feet, the women's being further from the house than the men's. Religion prescribed separate privies, less for the avoidance of indecency than from a fear that the contagion of menstruation and pregnancy might interfere with Ru-koro Kamui's vigour in repelling and expelling evil spirits.

Storehouses (*pu*) were always raised on posts four to five feet high. The chief object was protection from rats and mice. Bears could smash them easily, but their attempts were often put to flight or kept at bay by the dogs. The rat was the worst enemy, often finding its way in to devour millet or other food. Snakes also entered, ate the young rats and drove away or even killed the big ones.

The snake was a minor *kinashut kamui*, and as protector of provisions was known either as Haru[1] (provisions) *Kamui* or *Pu-Epungine* (store-protecting) Kamui. The women have charge of the storehouse; their respect for the snakes is mingled with fear.

Today one rarely sees a bear cub kept in a cage, either in the shed or outside, but in the days when the great Bear Festival was held it was a common sight. The only animals now kept are a dog or two in the shed.

The last spirit occupant of the house to be noted is Kenru Katkimat, a female house-spirit not to be confused with the real housewife, who is known as Chisei-koro Katkimat (house-possessing wife). Katkimat means literally ability-to-do-woman, and is a title of respect. *Mat* is the ordinary word for woman or wife, and is also applied to a few female spirits, both good and bad. Kenru Katkimat is rather hazily supposed to pervade the house. By some Ainu she is thought to be embodied in or represented by the *chisei-koro*

[1] *Haru* means food brought and given by *kamui*. Bear meat was called *kamui haru*, fish *chep haru* and edible plants *toi haru*. Bear meat was consumed only under the control of the householder, and he served bear meat to guests. Formerly each family seems to have had one storehouse for meat and another for fish.—H.W.

7:Munro & Seligman D. E-4. 5 (ca. 1900-1942) 1963
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partly washed off with the hot infusion; soot from the pot bottom was gently rubbed in, and a cloth, usually black, was dipped in the infusion and dabbed on the wound. At the same time a form of words *pash chi-yai, roshki, roshki, pash ren-ren* (soot enclosed remain, soot sink in, sink in) was repeated several, usually three, times as a spell.

The black colour of the cloth and the darkness of the infusion may have magical properties, for the Ainu know that neither the black dye of the Japanese cotton cloth nor the bark infusion could affect the colour of the tattooing to any extent.

Whether the avoidance of tattooing during menstruation was a taboo or was based on greater sensitiveness and liability to inflammation at that period is uncertain. Those being tattooed had to abstain from flesh and fat, live on water for two or three days and vegetable food for a week and remain in the house for at least a week; my aged informants, never secretive about their beliefs, regarded these merely as wise precautions to hasten healing. There was often so much swelling of the lips after extensive tattooing that eating and speaking were prevented for some days. It was rare that there was sufficient inflammation of the arms to discharge the pigment, but the scars were indelible.

The Ainu regarded tattooing not merely as beautiful but as emphasizing group solidarity and communion with their great spirit ancestress, Kamui Fuchi, whose soot protects them against the evil spirits which, though invisible, are always near.

In the southern districts tattooing has been abandoned by general consent within the last thirty or forty years. In the northern province of Kitami it was abandoned earlier, and there old women of 70 may be seen without it or with but a tiny spot on the edge of the upper lip.

Drugs and Medicines

The usual name for aconite is *suruku*, which may mean 'great bow poison'. In prayer it is called Monorushi Kamui,[1] the meaning of which is uncertain. It is a feminine *kamui* susceptible to flattery

[1] In the Saru Basin this *kamui* is said to be the head of the aconite spirits, and to have resided on the top of a sacred mountain near Piratori. The headman of Piratori village controlled the collection of the aconite which grew on the mountain, and which was highly prized as being extremely poisonous. The granting by him of permission to collect was accompanied by a *kamui-nomi* ritual and

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are animal deities. As it was only possible for Munro to obtain information from a few women who trusted him and his wife, the number of *kut* groups existing remains obscure. Nor is there any information indicating whether one deity was associated with more than one group.

Munro was told that Kamui Fuchi instructed A-e-oina Kamui, who in turn taught the Ainu, how to make the *upshoro-kut*, and that she also laid down all the regulations associated with them in the sacred traditions. In other accounts Kamui Fuchi is said to have given instructions to various female *kamui* who assumed animal form. It will be seen below (p. 147) that some of these regulations are not relevant to matrilineal exogamy, though Munro's informants insisted that they were taboos of the *kut*. Some women believed that their girdles were given directly by Kamui Fuchi, others maintained that they proved their descent from a particular animal deity. Two informants stated that no woman should approach the hearth unless she were wearing her *kut*. No woman should go near the caged sacred bear cub without it; if she did, the bear would show his disapproval by his hostile demeanour. The caged bear would also show his disapproval if a woman in a state of impurity—menstruation—were to come near him. In such cases a *tusu* would be consulted, and if the woman were found guilty she would be punished.

With great precautions for secrecy, Munro persuaded his women informants to make five different kinds of *kut* for him. These were woven from bast, which somewhat mitigated the impropriety of the task performed for a man and a foreigner. They were sent to Seligman, and have been deposited in the British Museum (Pl. XXVIII, figs. 1 and 2).

When Munro broached the subject with *ekashi*, with whom he was intimate, he was told that although they knew of the existence of the *kut* they had never seen one, and they affirmed the strictness of the rule of *kut* exogamy. Old women arrange marriages or investigate the *kut* inheritance of a prospective couple in order that the exogamy ruling should not be transgressed.

These facts led Munro to postulate totemism with matrilineal clans. In numerous letters he treated the matter as an hypothesis and related how he was searching for further evidence, both in existing custom and in ancient tradition. However, in his typescript for this book, and in an article he published in *Man*, No.

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892 826 hard it will be several years before they can have children. If both mates have hard blood they are condemned to childlessness, and nothing can help them, not even the cures mentioned above. It is significant that in this case they are not permitted [056] to turn to the shamans for help. These would definitely refuse to trouble the gods with such unclean affairs (ciachkire oruspe).

842 597 538 Sterility is not, however, something that should be punished with contempt. A childless family usually adopts a child from relatives. In the Ainu sagas and fairy tales it often happens that brave heroes who have always been successful in life and who have obtained a beautiful wife through great dangers and exertion, remain childless just because they were so powerful (we-nupuru). For children are ordinarily born only to the weaker (we cian) heroes of Ainu folklore.

841 834 589 Women who have no menstruation are recognized as sterile. These are the so-called "pure" who are designated by the Ainu as kiejsach machneku (that is, "bloodless"). These girls are strictly forbidden to have sexual intercourse with men, since they might by this find immediate death. Not long after my arrival among the Ainu /773/ a woman who had preserved her [056] innocence till late in life, died. She had shamanic tendencies and had for a long time been a shaman, from which can be deduced that she had a more tender and more receptive nervous system than the other girls. Among the Ainu can be found women with whom menstruation stops in youth. These women are condemned to complete sexual abstinence. A woman was pointed out to me who, though she lived together with an old man and was considered his wife, slept apart from him for the above mentioned reason. This had been going on for many years.

886 145 Menstruation. The Ainu know that when menstruation ceases that period of life begins for the woman when she is no longer capable of being fertilized. They were, however, unable to give me the average age at which this occurs. The Russian doctor N. Kirilov calculates this age to be 40 years.

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886 145 However, I believe that this figure is entirely arbitrary and based on the statements of only a few persons. My Ainu friends showed me a woman who must have been from 56 to 60 years old since her son was already 34. She had stopped menstruating scarcely three years before and was certainly not to be regarded as an exception, according to my acquaintances. From the statistical data that I collected among the population on the eastern shore of Sakhalin Island, it appears that 12 persons were [163] born to women of over 40 years of age. Of these women five bore children between the ages of 41 and 45, seven between the ages of 46 and 53. This constitutes 20 percent of all the women over 40 on the eastern shore of the island. It should be noted, however, that I only registered cases in which the children had remained alive, that is to say, the actual number of births is much greater. It may therefore be justly assumed that there are many women among the Ainu who menstruate beyond the age of 40 and whose menopause does not take place before 50.

• 841 145 Menstruation is not always regular among Ainu women. I knew for instance a young woman who later died of influenza at the age of 25, and who, according to her husband, lost so little blood that he would jokingly call her a man. This circumstance the young Ainu considered the cause of her sterility, and he sorrowfully confessed to me, that he would have to look for another wife in order to obtain offspring. She frequently complained of pains and said she had the feeling as though something moved in her entrails that caused these pains. Sometimes she also experienced difficulty in breathing at the same time.

It sometimes happens, though rather rarely, that Ainu women have their menstruation not every month, but every sixth week, which is called kiem o-utur tuima, that is, a great interruption of the blood.

Ordinarily menstruation lasts two to three days, and with some women it last four days. In the latter case it is always painful.

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841 846 [853] [833] After childbirth Ainu usually have no menses for a long time since for an extended period they nurse their children themselves. But if /774/ a woman is not moderate in her sexual relations she will have menses after five months even if she nurses her child herself.

841 292 [439] During menstruation Ainu women wear woven aprons which they buy either from the Japanese or the Russians. In former years they used aprons of seal-skin for this purpose. These aprons are tied round the nude body, not in front, but in the back. In sitting position the blood drips onto the apron and thus protects the clothing from spots. Sometimes it happens that the blood drips onto the floor of the yurt or of the yard when the woman walks about, since Ainu women do not wear any kind of pants. I myself have repeatedly seen such stains, although the women seek to avoid as much as possible such an occurrence which they consider indecent.

841 777 789 Here one can see again the great difference between the Ainu and the Gilyak in the relation of the family to women, which I indicated earlier in describing childbirth among these tribes. The Ainu consider it harmless to look at the blood of a woman or even to tread on a blood spot. In fact the blood of menstruation is even considered a good talisman. If someone sees a drop of blood on the floor he should wipe it off with his finger and smear his chest with it. It is an excellent expedient that can help everyone to wealth since it exercises a favorable influence in financial matters. The blood of the woman on the chest of the man becomes a talisman which brings it about that all those who deal with him in financial affairs have to give in to him, so that he derives great advantage from it. Whoever should get to see an apron used during menstruation, which actually can happen only very rarely, since the woman carefully hide these aprons from the eyes of all, but especially of the men, should ask its owner to give him a small piece of it. This he should always carry with him since it is considered a powerful talisman in the struggle of existence.

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841 224 777 789 755 562

Men who undertake long hunting expeditions almost always have a piece of such an apron with them, which also serves as a remedy for pains. In the latter case they moisten it and rub the sick spot with it.

All this points to the fact that among the Ainu there are still strong traces of the times when the woman played the principal part in the life of the family and of the man.